

The Transformer interview

*During the 2015 AVP USA national gathering, participants echoed calls heard in previous years: calls for greater diversity in the leadership of the organization. How did you respond to the call for diversity?
For AVP in 2016, in its continuing quest for diversity, what areas do you think we need improvement?
Are there any concrete plans in the making to foster diversity in our AVP leadership circle?
Why is diversity important and what is your vision for diversity in AVP?*

Response:

In terms of AVP, or any volunteer run organisation for that matter, it's where the energy lies that's important. AVP builds community from the community. Diversity of projects, diversity of people, all come together to move the organisation forward working as a team, serving our AVP community and supporting workshops around the world.

Local and national AVP groups worldwide are working on diversity by gathering the means to open access to AVP workshops in a wide variety of settings and communities. AVP workshops are currently being held in over 55 countries, divided into 5 AVP regions on 6 continents, in settings that include displacement camps and asylum seekers, refugee camps and communities, faith communities, schools and universities, prisons and detention centres, orphanages, professional associations, non-government organisations, and many others.

Within AVP International, the concept of diversity focuses more on supporting people who have the interest and energy to volunteer within the AVP International organisation in order to ensure we continue to have broad representation on our working committees and our Coordinating Committee (board).

The AVP International board is currently made up as follows:

- 18 people on the board
- 11 countries represented
- 10 women
- 8 men
- 4 do not speak English as a first language
- 3 under 30 yrs of age
- 8 between 30 & 50 yrs of age
- 7 over 50 yrs of age

The AVP International Nominating Committee holds diversity as a priority when preparing its recommendations for officer positions and committee membership, examining factors such as gender, age, nationality, language, and AVP experience.

Diversity and inclusion go hand in hand at AVP International. We strive to offer an inviting environment to all AVP people who choose to participate in this community and the organisation. The AVP International website is being developed into different languages to provide a common platform for AVP facilitators around the world to communicate with each other and share resources.

AVP facilitators everywhere are invited to bring their diversity of experience and energies to the AVP International organisation. Visit www.avp.international or contact us [here](#).

"I appreciate the diversity of AVP International, being a part of this organisation means we all have the same status, although we are all different."

Natuli, AVP-Georgia, representative for Europe on the AVP International Board.

*"The way we share personal experiences in our workshops shows how diversity is at the core of AVP."
Marie, AVP-South Africa, clerk of the AVP International Regional Committee.*

*"Diversity at AVP International means bringing together people with different and varied perspectives,
sharing their different cultures and ideas."
Tino, AVP-Mexico, AVP International webmaster.*